

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A moment ago when I was speaking about LB 294 and LB 1234 I told you it was probably one of the most important amendments or bills that we had on the floor because it was a protection of the taxpayer. Now I'm requesting 30 votes to absolutely strike everything in LB 716A and put in an amendment for a...that originally was in LB 542 as a committee amendment. This is similar to LB 542, a committee amendment, but I spoke to most of you privately about the problem that we're having and I spent the greater part of the last three days of last week speaking to people in Omaha in regard to the Bergan Mercy Hospital and the problem they've had for years. Now I'm not standing here before you to debate the merits of the certificate of need, but I ask you to amend a single portion of that law which has restricted one, and only one, major hospital in this state from carrying to completion the clinical task that they have otherwise been charged with. Currently, in Omaha the 911 rescue system uses several hospitals primarily as trauma and major illness resource centers. Among them, serving a large portion of the city is Bergan Mercy Hospital. However, Bergan is the only hospital, and I repeat, the only hospital which according to present statute cannot complete cardiac disease treatment because they are not allowed to provide open heart surgery under the present certificate of need statutes. So what I am asking you to do so we can further debate the problem we have in Omaha with Bergan Mercy Hospital that you suspend the rules and give me 30 votes to further debate the problem that we have, and I would like to say this is a life and death amendment and I will explain further after we receive the 30 votes to suspend the rules.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the Labeledz motion to suspend the rules. Senator Schmit. Thank you. Senator Haberman.

SENATOR HABERMAN: Mr. President, members of the body, this amendment is a very, very serious amendment and a very, very important amendment. Many, many times instead of having open heart surgery you go through a process called angioplasty. Now that process saves a person from having open heart surgery. It is where they go into the blood vessels of the heart with a balloon and they pump that balloon up and then smash the blockage against the walls. One thing you have to have when you have this type of help with your heart is you have to have, next door, a full team of surgeons, a surgery room ready to go in case that should fail and you have to immediately go over and